

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 CAIRO 15184

NODIS

CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR EG IS
SUBJECT: MESSAGE FOR SADAT

REF: STATE 151843

1. SUMMARY. IN ABSENCE SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA, I RAISED WITH KAMEL TODAY OUR PROPOSED SCENARIO CITED REFTTEL. ASSURED HIM WE WILL DO NOTHING WITHOUT FIRST FULLY CONSULTING WITH GOE. KAMEL'S INITIAL RESPONSE WAS THAT NO SUCH MEETING AS WE PROPOSE SHOULD TAKE PLACE UNLESS ISRAELI RESPONSES TO OUR TWO QUESTIONS ARE POSITIVE. WITHOUT THIS, ACCEDING TO A MEETING WITH DAYAN IN LONDON, EVEN WITH US PRESENT, WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR GOE IN ARAB WORLD. GOE CANNOT AFFORD AGAIN ISOLATE ITSELF IN ARAB WORLD. KAMEL NOTED THAT WE HAD EARLIER SPOKEN IN TERMS OF NEED FOR POSITIVE ISRAELI RESPONSES, BUT NOW SEEM TO BE SPEAKING OF SOMETHING LESS. DID THIS SIGNIFY CHANGE? EMPHASIZING THAT AT THIS POINT WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT ISRAELI RESPONSES WILL BE, I SUGGESTED THAT ALL OF US HAVE TO RECKON WITH POSSIBILITY THAT REPLIES MAY NOT BE EVERYTHING THAT WE MIGHT WISH. SHOULD THIS BE THE CASE, IT IS IN ALL OF OUR INTERESTS TO ACCENTUATE THE

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POSITIVE IN ORDER TO KEEP ME PEACE PROCESS GOING. KAMEL DOUBTED THAT BEGIN WILL COME UP WITH ANYTHING LIKE A POSITIVE RESPONSE AND EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT ANOTHER UNSUCCESSFUL MEETING WITH ISRAELIS WILL SET BACK PEACE PROCESS. IN RESPONSE HIS THINKING OUT LOUD WHETHER SCENARIO MIGHT BE REVERSED, I.E., SECRETARY MAKE TRIP TO AREA FIRST AND THEN POSSIBLY A MEETING WITH DAYAN, I

REMINDED HIM OF PROBLEMS WE FACE IN TRYING TO PROCEED ALONG THOSE LINES. KAMEL UNDERTOOK INFORM SADAT OF PROPOSAL AND SAID HE WISHES THINK ABOUT IT FURTHER BEFORE GIVING US DEFINITIVE REPLY. SUSPECT PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO SADAT MAY BE NECESSARY TO COSMETICIZE THE ISRAELI REPLIES SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE SADAT WILLING TO TAKE A CHANCE.

2. WITH SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA AND NO REALLY GOOD EXCUSE TO BYPASS KAMEL, I CALLED ON KAMEL TODAY TO DISCUSS PROPOSAL MADE REFTTEL AND TO ASK THAT HE OBTAIN SADAT'S REACTION ASAP. I SAID THAT IF KAMEL OR SADAT THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL THAT I PERSONALLY DISCUSS IT WITH THE PRESIDENT, I WOULD BE PLEASED TO DO SO AT THE EARLIEST TIME CONVENIENT TO SADAT.

3. I REAFFIRMED OUR EARLIER ASSURANCES TO KAMEL AND SADAT THAT WE WILL DO NOTHING WITHOUT FIRST FULLY CONSULTING WITH GOE. KAMEL EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION. (THIS IS A POINT THAT OBVIOUSLY WORRIES HIM.) I THEN REFERRED TO CURRENT ISRAELI PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN BEGIN AND HIS PRINCIPAL LIEUTENANTS TO HAMMER OUT AGREEMENT ON RESPONSES TO OUR TWO QUESTIONS IN PREPARATION FOR JUNE 12 CABINET MEETING. WHILE NO ONE COULD BE SURE WHEN ISRAELI RESPONSES WILL BE READY, WE ASSUME THAT WE WILL HAVE THEM EARLY NEXT WEEK. IF RESPONSES GIVE US SOMETHING TO WORK
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WITH--EVEN THOUGH NOT EVERYTHING ONE MIGHT WISH--WE WOULD WELCOME SADAT'S AND KAMEL'S PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO A PROPOSED SCENARIO ON HOW TO PROCEED NEXT.

4. RECALLING SADAT'S SUGGESTION TO ME, I NOTED OUR THOUGHT IS THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WILL THEN PROPOSE MEETING OF KAMEL AND FONMIN DAYAN JUNE 25-28 IN LONDON WITH SECRETARY VANCE ATTENDING. I EXPLAINED WHY WE CONSIDER THESE DATES AND VENUE MOST DESIRABLE FROM POINT OF VIEW OF THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE AND I EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THEY MAY ALSO BE CONVENIENT TO GOE. SAID WE, OF COURSE, HOPE THAT TALKS BETWEEN TWO FONMINS WILL PROVE PRODUCTIVE AND THAT BOTH SIDES WILL SEE REASON TO CONTINUE THEM EITHER IN LONDON OR SOME PLACE ELSE. ATHERTON WILL BE AVAILABLE TO STAY ON FOR AS LONG AS TALKS CONTINUE AND US PRESENCE IS DESIRED. THEREAFTER, IF TALKS END AND SECRETARY DEPARTS, ATHERTON COULD PROCEED TO AREA FOR FURTHER TALKS WITH SADAT AND ISRAELIS, PROVIDED PARTIES AGREE. THIS COULD BE PREPARATORY TO A VISIT TO ISRAEL, EGYPT, AND PERHAPS JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA BY THE SECRETARY DURING JULY, IF SUCH IS WARRANTED AND THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE PERMITS SUCH A TRIP. I ALSO NOTED OUR THOUGHTS ON WHAT

LONDON MEETING MIGHT DISCUSS.

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5. KAMEL'S INITIAL RESPONSE WAS THAT NO RPT NO SUCH MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE UNLESS THE ISRAELI RESPONSES TO OUR TWO QUESTIONS ARE POSITIVE. WITHOUT POSITIVE RESPONSES, HE DID NOT SEE HOW GOE CAN AGREE TO ANOTHER MEETING OF TWO FONMINS EVEN WITH A US PRESENCE. WHILE HE RECOGNIZED SUCH A MEETING MIGHT BE HELLLUL TO GCE IN TERMS OF FMERICCN AND EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION, WE SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK PROBLEMS WHICH IT COULD CAUSE FOR EGYPT IN THE ARAB WORLD. EVEN GOE'S FRIENDS, SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA, JORDAN AND OTHERS, HAVE BEEN URGING EGYPT TO TERMINATE SADAT'S INITIATIVE ON THE GROUNDS THAT NOTHING HAS COME OF IT AND PRIMIN BEGIN IS IF ANYTHING MORE INTRANSIGENT. KAMEL HAD ASSURED SAUDIS DURING HIS VISIT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT, WHILE SADAT STILL BELIEVES HIS PEACE INITIATIVE OFFERS CHANCE, GOE WILL NOT MEET WITH ISRAELIS AGAIN UNLESS THEIR RESPONSES TO USG QUESTIONS ARE DEMONSTRABLY POSITIVE. HENCE, THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE ISRAELI RESPONSES TO ANY EGYPTIAN DECISION ON WHAT TO DO NEXT" GOE, KAMEL CONTINUED, CANNOT AGAIN AFFORD TO "ISOLATE" ITSELF IN ARAB WORLD ON BASIS OF VAGUE OR NONN SUBSTANTIVE ISRAELI ANSWERS.

6. KAMEL RECALLED WE HAD EARLIER SPOKEN IN TERMS OF THE
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NEED FOR POSITIVE ISRAELI RESPONSES. FROM THE COMMENNS I HAD JUST MADE TO HIM, HE HAD GAINED THE IMMRESSION THAT OUR POSITION MAY HAVE ERODED. HE HOPED THAT HE WAS WRONG, BUT NOTED THAT WE SEEMED NOW TO BE SSEAKING OF THE ISRAELI SIMPLY GIVING US SOMETHING TO WORK WITH. HE WANTED DO KNOW WHAT THIS CHANGE SIGNIFIES? I ASSURED HIM THAT WE ARE STILL IMPRESSING UPON THE ISRAELIS THE NEED FOR POSITIVE RESPONSES. I EMPHASIZED THAT AT THIS POINT WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT ISRAELI RESPONSES WILL BE. HOWEVER, ON BASIS PRESS REPORTS OF DIVISIONS WITHIN ISRAELI CABINET ON WHAT ANSWERS TO GIVE TO OUR QUESTIONS, ALL OF US HAVE REALISTICALLY TO RECKON WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE REPLIES MAY NOT BE EVERYTHING THAT WE MIGHT WISH' SHOULD THAT BE THE CASE, I SUGGESTED THAT IT IS IN GOE INTEREST AS WELL AS OURS TO ACCENTUATE THE EOSITIVE IN THE ISRAELI RESPONSES. OUR CONCERN, I STRESSED, IS TO KEEP THE ME PEACE PROCESS GOING. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS IS ALSO SADAT'S AND KAMEL'S DESIRE. HENCE, THE FORMULATION ON ISRAELI RESPONSES THAT I HAD CONVEYED TO HIM.

7. KAMEL WAS CLEARLY WORRIED. HE SAID THAT HE WILL, OF COURSE, CONVEY OUR PROPOSALS TO SADAT AND WILL HIMSELF WANT TO DISCUSS THEM WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE HAD TO THINK SOME MORE ABOUT THEM. ANY MEETING WITH DAYAN TO DISCUSS VAGUE, INCONCLUSIVE ISRAELI REPLIES, HE WAS SURE, WILL ONLY AGAIN END IN FAILURE. THE PRESS REPORTS OUT OF ISRAEL ON BEGIN'S EFFORTS TO FIND A COMPROMISE FORMULA, HE NOTED, ARE HARDLY PROMISING. "NOTHING THAT COMES FROM BEGIN HELPS THE PEACE PROCESS", KAMEL LAMENTED. IF THE ISRAELI RESPONSES ARE POSITIVE, HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH DAYAN AND THE SECRETARY IN LONDON. IF THEY ARE NEGATIVE OR INCONCLUSIVE, AS HE RATHER SUSPECTED

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WILL BE THE CASE, THE GOE HAS TO CONSIDER WHETHER AN IMMEDIATE FOLLOW-ON VISIT BY THE SECRETARY WILL SUFFICIENTLY CHANGE THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION IN THE ARAB WORLD THAT FURTHER UNSUCCESSFUL TALKS WITH DAYAN IS CERTAIN TO AROUSE. EGYPT, HE REITERATED, DOES NOT AGAIN WISH UNNECESSARILY TO EXPOSE ITSELF TO ARAB CRITICISM. ASKED WHAT HE WOULD REGARD AS A POSITIVE REPLY, KAMEL SAID ISRAELI AGREEMENT TO HOLD A PLEBISCITE AT THE END OF THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. I TOLD HIM I THOUGHT HE WAS ASKING TOO MUCH AND WOULD HAVE TO SETTLE FOR LESS. HE WANTED TO THINK ABOUT THIS SOME MORE AND TO DISCUSS IT WITH SADAT.

8. HE WONDERED OUT LOUD WHETHER THE SCENARIO MIGHT NOT BE REVERSED; A TRIP BY THE SECRETARY FIRST AND THEN POSSIBLY A MEETING WITH DAYAN. I REMINDED HIM THAT THE SECRETARY'S ABILITY TO HELP IS CONSTRAINED BY (A) THE LACK OF ANY EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSALS ON THE WEST BANK/ GAZA (WE NOW HAVE ONE)(SEPTTEL), AND (B) GOE VULNERABILITY TO THE CHARGE THAT THEY WITHDREW THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION FROM THE JERUSALEM POLITICAL COMMITTEE TALKS BEFORE THESE TALKS HAD GOTTEN SUBSTANTIVELY UNDERWAY. IN VIEW OF THIS SITUATION, WE BELIEVE THE NEXT STEP OUGHT TO BE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN DAYAN AND KAMEL. SECRETARY AND/OR ATHERTON WOULD BE PRESENT. KAMEL SAID HE UNDERSTOOD OUR PROBLEM, BUT HOPED WE APPRECIATE THAT OUR PROPOSAL IS A DIFFICULT ONE FOR EGYPT IF ISRAELI REPLIES ARE LESS THAN POSITIVE. HE PROMISED TO LET US HAVE MORE DEFINITIVE GOE REACTION AFTER HE HAS TALKED WITH SADAT AND THOUGHT ABOUT IT SOME MORE.

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9. HE DID NOT COMMENT ON QUESTION OF ATHERTON COMING TO THE AREA, SINCE THE PRIMARY QUESTION ON HIS MIND RIGHT NOW IS WHETHER THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE IN LONDON IS DESIRABLE. KAMEL REPEATEDLY ASKED WHETHER I WAS SURE THAT ISRAELIS HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED OF OUR PROPOSAL AND WILL NOT BE UNTIL EGYPTIANS GIVE DEFINITIVE REPLY. I ASSURED HIM THAT THIS IS THE CASE.

10. COMMENT: EGYPTIANS HAVE PICKED UP CHANGE IN OUR FORMULATION FROM THE NEED FOR POSITIVE ISRAELI REPLIES TO SOMETHING THAT WE CAN WORK WITH. KAMEL IS ESPECIALLY

WORRIED ABOUT SAUDI REACTION. IT MIGHT HELP TO
ENCOURAGE EGYPTIANS, ASSUMING ISRAELI REPLIES ARE LESS
THAN WE HAD HOPED FOR, IF WE COULD SOMEHOW PERSUADE
SAUDIS THAT THEY GIVE US ENOUGH TO WORK WITH AND TRY TO
URGE SAUDI ACQUIESCENCE TO EGYPTIAN ATTENDANCE AT PRO-
POSED LONDON CONFERENCE. HOPE TO HAVE MORE DEFINITIVE
EGYPTIAN RESPONSE IN NEXT DAY OR TWO, BUT IT IS LIKELY
TO BE ABOVE LINES UNLESS WE CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT ISRAELI
RESPONSES REALLY OFFER SOME POSITIVE PROSPECTS. IT WILL
BE DIFFICULT FOR SADAT TO AGREE TO HAVE KAMEL ATTEND SUCH
A CONFERENCE. PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO SADAT MAY BE
NECESSARY TO COSMETICIZE THE ISRAELI RESPONSES SUFFICI-
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ENTLY TO MAKE SADAT WILLING TO TAKE THE CHANCE. EILTS

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